

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 1, 2002

CONTACT: Martha Deacon
Information Officer
(615) 741-2257 (O)
(615) 385-1728 (H)

NASHVILLE – Genlyte Thomas thanked the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development today for the department’s assistance that is allowing the company to upgrade employee skills to stay competitive in the marketplace.

Genlyte Thomas is one of three industries working within the Incumbent Worker Training pilot project, a part of the Workforce Investment Act that provides training costs to employers who must retool to avert worker dislocation.

“The employee training taking place for this company is a prime example of the intent of the Incumbent Worker Training program,” said TDLWD Commissioner Michael E. Magill. “We’re pleased the Department of Labor & Workforce Development is able to assist Genlyte Thomas in moving toward world-class manufacturing.”

The company held a reception at the facility at 3300 McMinnville Highway in Sparta.

Steve Woodlee, Operations Manager at the Sparta facility, said, “The training program is helping to improve our skill levels in order for us to better handle the more sophisticated, high-tech machinery and equipment that we are currently operating. We are in the process of adding more of this type equipment within this year, and this training will prove even more valuable for future projects. Our future looks much brighter, and these are the kinds of skills that will help us ‘grow our business.’ We wanted to take this opportunity to just say thanks to the TDLWD and all the other folks who have shown such great support.”

James Daniels, Human Resources Manager, said that thanks to the staff of the Department of Labor & Workforce Development working hand-in-hand with the county, city, and state governments, the workforce at Genlyte Thomas is facing a secure future. He went on to add that everyone at the facility joined hands in making sure that this happened, including IBEW Local 2143, which agreed to an extended contract with the company. He also said that the help of Wallace Austin, president of the Sparta/White County Chamber of Commerce, was invaluable in bringing the different entities together. “Wallace spearheaded this entire effort, and without his help we doubt that we could have gotten this many people to listen to what we were saying”, said Daniels. “So we want everyone involved to know that the employees of Genlyte Thomas feel that we owe you all a debt of gratitude.”

Nine company employees began the skill-upgrade training at the Tennessee Technology Center at Crossville in December and will be enrolled for six months. The total amount of the federally funded

Incumbent Worker Training grant for the company is \$10,000. Genlyte Thomas manufactures lighting fixtures and controls for the commercial and industrial markets.

In addition to the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development, the following partners are involved in the project: the Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development, White County Government, City of Sparta, the Workforce Investment Board for LWIA 7, TVA, local vendors, and the Genlyte Thomas employees receiving the training.

--30--

(02-011)

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

El Departamento del Trabajo y de la Fuerza Laboral es un organismo empresarial que aplica la igualdad de oportunidades. Los Servicios y ayudas auxiliares están disponibles para los individuos con impedimentos si los solicitan.